

Mother of Sorrows

by NS

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Summary: Don't think it's been done before. My first real fic...I've done poetry, but this is the real McCoy. R/R, puh-lease!

Mother of Sorrows

She staggered down the dim-lit London alleyway, barely clinging to consciousness. She had only a vague idea of where she was going, but something deep within her knew that she had to get there before her time on this world was over. Footsteps slow, but purposeful, her mind reeling, she cast about for something to cling to.

>
 Almost randomly, her past presented itself.

>
 She remembered being a little girl, her mother lifting her up into her lap. _"Mum always smelled like lavender,"_ she thought dimly. _"Many different herbs, potion ingredients, but lavender always at the forefront."_

>
 Her mother held her close, her long, smooth fingers combing through the hair of her daughter. While the younger girl's tresses still held the downy softness of childhood, it was the same blue-black as her own.

>
 _"Deirdre, always remember this. Your power is great, my little daughter. The blood of the great Slytherin flows through your veins, undiluted throughout the years. The blood of majesty and magic. You are a pure-blood, and someday you'll be a witch, strong as I am, ready to carry on our family line, just as I have with you. Salazar Slytherin lives within you, my child, and you must keep his memory alive."

>
 _She hadn't listened to the words then, just lay back in her mother's lap, happy to be in the arms of the woman who loved her the most in the world. She admired the contrast of her mother's soft, tan skin against her slippery satin gown. Deirdre had always thought her mother was the most beautiful woman in the world.

>
 Her mother had been a Dark witch, she knew that now. Still, that hadn't meant that she loved her any less. In fact, Deirdre and her mother had always been very close. That only meant that the pain was worse when she was cast away from them forever...

>
 The child within her kicked, bringing her out of the mists of memory and into her present situation. She stopped to lean against a

filthy wall, trying to bring back some of her fleeing strength. The long raven hair that had been her genetic inheritance from her beloved mother hung limp around her shoulders, and she brushed it away feebly.

>
 She looked down at her swollen belly, and a small smile came over her face. One would think that in her weakened state, she would have either lost this child by now, or it would be weaker than she.

>
 Quite to the contrary. Her unborn child was strong and healthy. Anyone could see that. Deirdre's naturally slim frame, made even more fragile by illness and hunger, was dwarfed by the enormous child she carried within her, and the lusty kicks it gave sporadically was tantamount to its strength.

>
 Another spasm came over her, and she doubled in pain. She had to reach her goal before it was too late. But, she paused for a minute, cradling the bulge that held her child, thinking about its history.

>
 Oh, she had loved Tom. And her Tom had loved her right back. She pictured him, his tall, lanky form, fair-haired and grey-eyed, and a stab of pain hit her that had absolutely nothing to do with her physical condition.

>
 They were a fairy tale couple, she with her dark haired, exotic royal good looks, and he with his Prince Charming smile. All his friends said they were something straight out of Grimm's tales. Of course, her former friends would never have seen him. She knew for certain that they never even spoke about her after she had "left." Uncle would have had them killed in various aesthetically horrifying ways if they had even mentioned her.

>
 Tom had been her Prince Charming, come to carry her off from the tower. But she hadn't WANTED to be carried off. She loved her family, loved Mother, Father and her brothers, living in perfect ignorance of what they were, what they did on a daily basis, the life that they led outside their comfortable home.

>
 Certainly, she had been a Slytherin. There wasn't a question of what House she would be in. Didn't Salazar's very blood run through her veins, hers and this child she was carrying, growing more impatient with the minutes? But, she had had no idea of what her family represented, no idea until the day after graduation from Hogwarts, when her uncle had revealed his true colors to the wizarding world, and the Dark magic that had lain dormant in him for so long reared its ugly head.

>
 Another rending pain seared her body, jolting her mind back once more. Deirdre gritted her teeth and set off towards the place that she must reach. She knew that she would somehow make it there. She had to.

>
 After all, Deirdre Grindelwald Riddle was nothing if not a survivor.

>
 Her fatigued body wandered along, but Deirdre's mind continued to wander across the scattered pages of her life. She remembered fragments of her life with and after Tom. The first meeting, the building of their relationship, the first wonderful, then horrifying realization that she loved him.

>
 "_Love shouldn't have to be horrifying,_" she thought. "_My family...my family that loved me...they should have loved him._" They had cherished her as the token daughter, a "rose among thorns," as her older brothers had called her. Why couldn't they have seen the man she loved, seen beyond their status in the wizarding world, seen him as the one she loved, and not just a Muggle?

>
 As horrifying as it was and had to be for her family, she loved him, and he loved her. And, so, she gave up everything for him.

Her family life, her status as a witch, her darling mother...this was what she traded for her Tom. And it was worth it to her. Their love was the most concentrated happiness that she had ever known. Nothing like her former family life-- how could it be?

>
 "_We lived in his father's gardens._" She stopped in mid-pace, remembering. It even sounded strange to her, she who had lived and loved, and known such bliss there. She and Tom had lived for a blessed six months in a little cottage in a willow grove on Marvolo Riddle's beautifully kept grounds.

>
 Six months they had had together. It hadn't been perfect happiness-- what ever is?-- but it had been beautiful. And, after six months together, her Tom had died. They had told her that it was a freak accident at his woodworking shop, a machine that had gone wrong, but she wasn't a witch for nothing. She knew Memory Charms when she saw them, and she knew that her uncle had caught up with the Muggle who had robbed them of their darling Deirdre. If she couldn't be happy with them, she couldn't be happy at all, and especially not with a Muggle.

>
 Her once-loving family had taken from her the only thing that mattered after they had cast her out. But she had gotten the ultimate revenge.

>
 "_Their precious blood of Slytherin, the evil that it causes, the pain it's given me and the man I loved, has been passed on, and mingled with the blood of a Muggle. Their pure-blood dreams will be dashed forever." _Her pain-maddened mind focused on this one thing. _

>
 _Deirdre stopped dead in her tracks, and her eyes gazed at the sign on the building in front of her. "Chisham Street Orphanage." Another pain, a real contraction this time, gripped her, and she staggered in.

>
 The next ten minutes passed in a half-conscious flurry of motion and pain. Steady voices calmed her, hands carried her to a soft bed, and she was told to push. The child inside of her needed no urging to come out and join the world of the living, but her weakness and size was prohibiting that.

>
 Deirdre called on the strength that she knew was there, buried deep beneath her physical infirmity, the emotional horror she had been through, the layers of strife, and PUSHED. She bore down and pushed, for herself, for her Tom, for this child that was neither of her anymore nor of the world quite yet....

>
 As her child entered the world into rough, work-callused hands, Deirdre felt the blood, the birth water, and even, indeed the life flow out of her. This fluid that was gushing out of her, this pure blood of tyrants and kings and wizards and witches, even Salazar Slytherin himself, this blood was what had been and would be fought over for years past and years to come. This was the reason that her family had cast her out, and the reason that her husband had been taken from her. This fluid that had sustained her for so long would be the death of her.

>
 But not quite yet. She reached for her baby, still wet from birth. "Let me hold my child."

>
 She looked at him, her son. Tom's son, with her dark hair and his grey eyes. She smiled at him, a smile that held the peace of new motherhood, and the slow calm of imminent death. "I love you, my son, my new baby boy. And I'm sorry that I won't live to see you grow up. But you will live. For you are a Riddle, a Riddle in name and nature, my child. And you will have my power, my strength, and my love forever. Your father and I will love you from beyond the grave. Always remember this, my son. Love is stronger than any spell, than any misfortune that may befall you. Love will conquer all who oppose

it. And I will love you always."

>
 Deirdre broke the fascinated gaze of her new son, and said weakly to the amazed orphanage workers. "Name him Tom Marvolo Riddle. Tom for his father, and Marvolo for his grandfather. And take care of him..."

>
 Death took her, mercifully and silently, carefully bypassing the baby who still lay cradled in her thin arms. For it was plain to everyone who looked at the newborn already:

>
 Tom Marvolo Riddle was nothing, if not a survivor.

>

>

>
 Author's Notes: Well, that was interesting. It just kind of came to me after hearing En Vogue's song, entitled, appropriately enough: "Riddle." They started the creative process, and while I don't even like the song that much, and this turned out nothing like my original idea, it gave me a seed. No one's ever done anything about Voldemort's mum, for all that I know, sorry to the author if they have.

>
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>
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>
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>
 And, Luke, who'll probably never read this. See-- not a single swear word!

>
 This is turning into a Oscar acceptance speech. Reviews and questions can be sent to NSGoddessQ@aol.com. Flames will be used to gather and sing folk songs around. Hope you liked it!

End
file.